

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ICONOGRAPHY OF THE MEDIEVAL ITALIAN CITY GATE

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There has not been, it seems, any systematic attempt to discuss the city gate iconographies of medieval Italy.¹ There is no attempt in what follows, I must hasten to add, to provide something of the sort here, but rather to indicate the richness of the subject and at most to indicate some possible approaches. The starting point will be, inevitably, the classical period which I shall treat briefly and then attempt to carry the story forward until the fourteenth century, from which most of my evidence is drawn. Some of the approaches sketched here would certainly prove fruitful for city gates outside Italy.² I shall deal almost exclusively with sculpted or painted decoration, not with fortification, still less urbanism, although some of the cities with which we shall be concerned, like Volterra, were on hill sites, while others like Milan were cities of the plain, and like their biblical predecessors destroyed. It should also be borne in mind that a purely functional taxonomy of medieval city gates could be undertaken, with, quite likely, differing conclusions. Gates built in peacetime differed radically from those erected under threat of attack, be it from Barbarossa or Henry VII.

In medieval Europe it was perhaps the profusion and size of its cities that set Italy apart.³ Besides the four very large cities of Venice, Milan, Genoa, and Florence, there existed some score or more with between twenty thousand and fifty

thousand inhabitants.⁴ This density of urbanization, in conjunction with Italian political circumstance, helps to account for the number of walled and gated cities—largely coincident with the area of communal Italy.⁵ This situation drew forth a literature of urban description unrivaled in medieval Europe. Within Italy, after Rome, Milan had what might be termed unequivocally a tradition of descriptive literature, but there are also descriptions of, among others, Lodi, Verona, Florence, and Padua.⁶ Some of these treatises fall into a genre, which Kenneth Hyde has aptly termed “speculative archaeology,” of considerable importance.⁷ It is unlikely to be wholly fortuitous that the great flowering of urban description lies within the period 1280–1340, when gates were built at Volterra, Orvieto, Florence, Milan, Perugia, and Siena. However, such city descriptions almost invariably give the number of gates, after the manner of Magister Gregorius or Bonvicinus de Ripa, and other forms of documentation are often more useful.

It can be a matter for little argument that Roman precedent was deeply influential, but an important earlier avatar is the so-called Porta Marzia at Perugia, which is recorded in its original state in a fresco by Benedetto Bonfigli.⁸ Only the upper part of the gate now retains its original form, rep-

¹ Versions of a lecture on which this paper is based were delivered at Warwick University, the Courtauld Institute of Art, and the Bibliotheca Hertziana. For Roman gates the ample survey by F. Frigerio, “Antiche porte di città italiane e romane,” *Rivista archeologica dell'antica provincia e diocesi di Como* 108/110 (1935), 3–285, remains of value. H. Kähler, “Die römischen Torburgen der frühen Kaiserzeit,” *JDAI* 57 (1942), 1–108, is fundamental.

² For an attempt to deal with the medieval city gates of the Rheinland cf. U. Mainzer, *Stadttore im Rheinland* (Neuss, 1975).

³ J. K. Hyde, *Society and Politics in Medieval Italy* (London, 1973), 153.

⁴ Of towns to be discussed below Verona, Siena, Perugia, and Rome had between twenty and forty thousand inhabitants; Hyde, *Society*, map 5.

⁵ Hyde, *Society*, 153.

⁶ J. K. Hyde, “Mediaeval Descriptions of Cities,” *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 48 (1966), 308–40, here 317.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 322.

⁸ I. A. Richmond, “Commemorative Arches and City Gates in the Augustan Age,” *JRS* 23 (1933), 149–74, here 161; Kähler, “Torburgen,” 47. R. Herbig, “Giebel, Stallfenster und Himmelsbogen,” *RM* 42 (1927), 117–28, esp. 120 ff. For the fresco by Bonfigli cf. F. Santi, *La Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria in Perugia* (Rome, 1968), 42 ff.

resenting Zeus between Castor and Pollux standing on a balcony on the threshold of the city. Preserved in the alteration of the city wall undertaken by Antonio di Sangallo il Giovane at the behest of Pius III, the influence of this sculptural ensemble may be traced in the mid-Trecento gallery beneath the rose window at Siena.⁹ It should not be overlooked that in its original state the gate at Perugia had a strategic rationale also. To approach its tangential opening, an attacker would have to expose his left flank along a considerable tract of defended wall.¹⁰ The Porta Marzia was relatively unimportant on later Roman gates however. These, despite some generic reference to a Greek past, were in all essentials a Roman innovation, and the creation of a gate facade was an achievement of Roman art.

The whole early development of the city gate in the Roman period had been for defensive purposes.¹¹ It is hardly coincidental, thus, that the majority of surviving gates in Italy are north of the Po, although new, albeit indirect, evidence has recently been adduced.¹² Gradually the military aspect of the city gate diminished with the pervasive peace of the early Empire, and from a predominantly military conception comes the display gate, or *Prunktor*, which differed substantially in function as well as in aesthetic intention. Like the earlier gates, this later *porta urbana* was radically contingent on the political situation. The barbarian challenge of the third century served to stifle subsequent development. Later Roman gates, like the Porta Nigra at Trier, despite its almost theatrical monumentality, were military architecture once again.¹³ It was in response to the barbarian incursions that the gates and walls most influential for the medieval world were to be constructed, the Aurelian walls of Rome.

Roman city gates differed in a number of significant ways from their Greek and Italic precursors. They pierced the city walls at right angles wherever possible, and, as at Rome itself, they normally

reflected the status of the roads they spanned.¹⁴ Gates commonly took their names from these roads, and this custom endured. The major Aurelian gates of Rome possessed a double entrance, itself a functional choice that doubtless heightened their efficiency. There came into being also a growingly evident distinction between the exterior and interior facade of these gates.¹⁵ This differentiation, which stemmed from the original military imperative of access to walkways and towers, maneuvering the portcullis and so forth, became, later in the Empire, reflected by distinct architectural styles. It was early recognized that the city gate had, so to speak, a captive audience among the travelers who approached its entrance, and this essential difference of treatment between outer and inner faces of gates was never henceforth wholly lost to sight, neither in late Antiquity or in the Middle Ages.

Whereas in the Augustan epoch, as subsequently, gates, and the fortifications of which they formed part, were quite literally submerged by the abutment of civilian buildings within, a new purpose and urgency returned with the age of invasions. Rome was swiftly girdled with a wall pierced by a series of simple, standardized, and effective gates, conceived essentially in terms of their capacity to repel an adversary who possessed no siege machinery.¹⁶ This massive reef, on which, it was fervently hoped, waves of barbarians would break and dissipate, reflects in some sense the passive and inwardly regarding nature of the city's defense.¹⁷ It was the defensive upgrading of this wall, most likely under Maxentius, that conferred on the city gates the imposing grandeur which so gauntly imprinted itself on the medieval imagination—gates such as the new Porta Appia or the Porta Asinaria.¹⁸ When these gates were subsequently restored and again strengthened under Honorius, it was the coloristic distinction, when the brick towers were clad, in their lower zones, with white travertine, as well as their figural decoration, that was to prove influential.¹⁹ It was the lowering aspect of these gates that made them

⁹H. Keller, "Die Bauplastik des Sieneser Doms. Studien zu Giovanni Pisano und seiner künstlerischen Nachfolge," *Kunstgeschichtliches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 1 (1937), 139–220.

¹⁰Richmond, "Commemorative Arches," 163.

¹¹Kähler, "Torburgen," 28 ff; T. Bechert, "Römische Lagertore und ihre Bauinschriften," *BjB* 171 (1971), 201–87.

¹²F. Rebecchi, "Antefatti tipologici dalle porte a galleria. Su alcuni rilievi funerari di età tardo-repubblicana con raffigurazione di porte urbane," *BullComm* 86 (1978/79), 153–66.

¹³A. Boëthius and J. Ward-Perkins, *Etruscan and Roman Architecture* (Harmondsworth, 1970), 520 ff, fig. 268; E. Gose, *Die Porta Nigra in Trier* (Berlin, 1969).

¹⁴Kähler, "Torburgen," 6.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 30; R. Brilliant, *Roman Art* (London, 1974), 63 ff.

¹⁶I. A. Richmond, *The City Wall of Imperial Rome* (rpr. College Park, Md., 1971), 74, 242; Brilliant, *Roman Art*, 61 ff; M. Todd, *The Walls of Rome* (London, 1978), 22 ff.

¹⁷Richmond, *City Wall*, 67.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 121 ff, 144 ff; Todd, *Walls*, 35 ff.

¹⁹Richmond, *City Wall*, 260. Capua was similarly differentiated (see below). Marked coloristic distinctions existed also on the gates of Orvieto and Milan.

serve as a visual topos for a Roman setting in such scenes as the martyrdom of St. Peter, and it is no accident that gates figure so prominently in views of Rome, such as that by Cimabue at Assisi, or on the gold *bullae* of the Germanic emperors.²⁰ Such medieval Italian communes as possessed Roman gates, such as Fano or Ravenna, placed them on the civic seal: the legend of the Fano seal ran IN FANI PORTIS / CUSTOS EST LEO FORTIS.²¹ The ceremonial and triumphal aspects of the gates of Rome were enhanced by Honorius' addition of statues and inscriptions.

Another development of great moment for later gate iconography occurs with the invention—Pliny explicitly terms it such—of the triumphal arch.²² Its chief purpose was the support of statuary, and its representative role was normally unsullied by any military function.²³ This requirement should alert us to a basic difference between arch and gate, entrances both, which is that of depth. City gates are almost invariably shallower than triumphal arches and could not sustain a monumental sculptural group.²⁴ Whereas relief sculpture had been set up on the early Porta Marzia, military considerations were primary. A distinct class of commemorative arches, which included the lost arch at Rimini as well as Pola and Orange, was associated, topographically as well as iconographically, with city gates.²⁵ This association was the result of peacetime elaboration, and the link was to have a profound effect on triumphal arch design and later, as a reflex of the arch compositions, on the city gate. This, perhaps as much as any single factor, had diluted the military aspect of the Roman gate, as it was also to relax the stylistic idiom of gate architecture. But here as elsewhere historical circumstance was to be crucial.

Inscriptions and literary evidence establish that some of the restored gates of the Aurelian circuit

received statues. Simulacra of Honorius and Arcadius were set up, most likely between the merlons of the now much altered Porta Tiburtina, where an inscription to that effect is still indistinctly preserved.²⁶ It is even likely that similar figures were voted for other gates as well.²⁷ Such representations of living rulers may well owe something to such triumphal arches as that of Pavia, where ten members of the imperial family were placed, or the arch built or planned at Pisa.²⁸ All such statues appear to have been standing figures. By the end of the second century A.D. the emperor's achievements were customarily displayed to the populace on a triumphal arch, and this convention was to play a not inconsiderable role in the development of the medieval city gate. The programmatic content of the triumphal arch tended to become simpler and its message enunciated with an ever less ambiguous clarity and force.²⁹ The chronology of the Roman gates is of the utmost importance. As the threat of barbarian attack became a horrifying actuality many other towns drastically reduced their defended perimeters, to such an extent, in many cases, that one may legitimately inquire what in fact the walls were intended to protect.³⁰ As Isidore of Seville later put it: "Urbs ipsa moenia sunt."³¹

Augustan gates were ill-fitted for statuary: triumphal arches fulfilled that function admirably, but for defensive reasons these arches were conditioned in their form by the city gates behind them. Contingent on this location was an increase in scale and the development of arch forms with double or triple openings and more complex sculptural programs.³² In later periods the distinction between such arches and gates became blurred. Arch motifs were often repeated on coins, often with sim-

²⁰ W. Erben, *Rombilder auf kaiserlichen und päpstlichen Siegeln des Mittelalters*, Veröff HSGraz 7 (Graz, 1937).

²¹ G. C. Bascapé, "I sigilli dei Comuni italiani," *Studi di paleografia, diplomatica, storia e araldica in onore di Cesare Manaresi* (Milan, 1953), 62–123; republished with additions in idem, *Sigillografia*, I (Milan, 1969), 214. For Ravenna see *ibid.*, 213.

²² *Naturalis Historia*, 34.27; G. A. Mansuelli, "Fornix e Arcus. Note di Terminologia," in *Studi sull'arco onorario romano*, *Studia archaeologica* 21 (Rome, 1979), 15–17.

²³ Richmond, "Commemorative Arches," 173; G. Gualandi, "L'apparato figurativo negli archi augustei," *Studi sull'arco onorario*, 93–141.

²⁴ Richmond, "Commemorative Arches," 172; L. A. Holland, *Janus and the Bridge*, PAAR 21 (Rome, 1961), 87.

²⁵ Richmond, "Commemorative Arches," 149 ff; cf. H. Kähler, "Triumphbogen," *RE* 7A, cols. 373–493, here 472 ff.

²⁶ Richmond, *City Wall*, 178; for the inscription see *ibid.*, 31 note 4. Todd, *Walls*, 64 ff.

²⁷ Richmond, *City Wall*, 34.

²⁸ Pavia, Kähler, "Triumphbogen," col. 408, no. 13; cf. *CIL*, V, 6146; S. de Maria, "La Porta Augustea di Rimini nel quadro degli archi commemorativi coevi. Dati strutturali," in *Studi sull'arco onorario*, 73–91, here 74 ff. Pisa, Kähler, *op. cit.*, col. 408, no. 14; Gualandi, "L'apparato," 107; *CIL*, XI, 1421; de Maria, "La Porta," 91.

²⁹ Gualandi, "L'apparato," 135; R. Brilliant, *The Arch of Septimius Severus in the Roman Forum*, MAAR 29 (Rome, 1967), 35; idem, *Roman Art*, 122.

³⁰ S. Johnson, *Late Roman Fortifications* (London, 1983), 115.

³¹ Isidore, *Etymologia*, XV, 2; cf. U. Niccolini, "Le mura medievali di Perugia" (below, note 97), 708.

³² Richmond, "Commemorative Arches," 173; G. Mansuelli, "Il monumento augusteo del 27 a. C. Nuove ricerche sull'arco di Rimini," *Arte antica e moderna* 8 (1959), 363–91, and 9 (1960), 16–39; Kähler, "Triumphbogen," col. 487.

plifying effect, and this transcription helped to preserve the composition for later ages.³³ Manifestly the city gate was an available and highly appropriate place to impress the approaching wayfarer or daunt an opponent. Thus the emperor, tutelary deities, or local notables might be set on triumphal arches, and as arch and gate became increasingly indistinguishable, this influenced the program of medieval city gates.³⁴ Arches normally had two facades for display, but in the case of those originally associated with gates, the city-ward side might be summarily treated for reasons of strategic planning or simple visibility. Certainly this distinction between the interior and exterior of gates was inevitably taken to greater lengths under the pressure of function.

Statues on gates could signify many nuances of dominion, protection, intimidation, or defiance. But the wall as threshold mattered also. In Roman times the walls had been *res sacrae*, and the development of their juridical status undergoes a significant extension.³⁵ Even later, as at Tipasa, the walls might be dedicated to Diocletian and Maxentius, but under a Christian emperor this would not do.³⁶ At Constantinople the Virgin was guardian of the walls, and a number of frontier forts bore dedications to the Virgin. There the myth of the god-guarded city endured longer.³⁷ Crosses and chrisms appear on many of the gates of Rome, but they are difficult to date exactly, although they must often be later additions.³⁸ The apotropaic function of these crosses is evident in view of the widespread belief that the powers of evil lurked at such entrances. Thresholds were in special need of apotropaia. Crosses on thresholds appear to have become commoner in the fifth century, and it has been plausibly suggested that the prohibition of 427 on crosses on floors may have been prompted by the spread of this custom.³⁹ Be that as it may,

the sacred aspect of thresholds is another factor we must consider. The archangel Michael long remained a powerful saint at gateways. He was invoked on the lintels of sixth-century Syrian churches and fortresses, as on the church portals of Romanesque Burgundy.⁴⁰ Michael was also a healer, and beside the Augustan gate at Fano is an oratory and hospital dedicated to the archangel. On the facade of the late Quattrocento oratory the Roman arch was later carved in relief at a cost of three gold ducats in 1513.⁴¹ It is the primary document for the original design of the gate.⁴² The statue of Michael that surmounts the oratory's facade is, fittingly enough, carved from an ancient tombstone once set beside the Via Flaminia.⁴³

It seems certain that one of the prime reasons for the preservation of the Porta Nigra at Trier was the insertion of an oratory dedicated to St. Michael.⁴⁴ The Sicilian hermit Simeon established a cell there in 1030 and an oratory to St. Michael. Simeon had been a pilgrim guide in Jerusalem, and his widespread eremitical experience included Mount Sinai before he captivated the archbishop of Trier, Poppo von Babenberg.⁴⁵ If we may believe Simeon's biographer, the somewhat credulous Abbot Eberwin, the holy man found the climate at Trier very different from his native Sicily. His initial diet of bread and water gave way to minestrone ("aqua infusa legumine") and eventually a little wine.⁴⁶ The essential point, however, is that the gate from an early date contained an oratory of St. Michael which was later transformed into an imposing abbey. The practice of taking up residence in the walls is also attested in Rome. Etienne

³³ For example, Nero's Parthian arch; Brilliant, *The Arch of Septimius*, 37, fig. 9a.

³⁴ Richmond, "Commemorative Arches," 172; Richmond, *City Wall*, 178.

³⁵ W. Seston, "Les murs, les portes et les tours des enceintes urbaines et le problème des *res sanctae* en droit romain," *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire offerts à André Piganiol*, III (Paris, 1966), 1488–98, here 1489 ff.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 1498.

³⁷ N. H. Baynes, "The Supernatural Defenders of Constantinople," *AB* 67 (1949), 165–77; E. von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder, Untersuchungen zur christlichen Legende* (Leipzig, 1899), 116 ff, 138 ff; Edessa, *IGLSyr*, IV, no. 1673, are exemplary.

³⁸ G. B. Giovenale, "Simboli tutelari su porte del recinto urbano ed altri monumenti dell'antichità," *BullComm* 57 (1929), 183–267, here 249 ff; Richmond, *City Wall*, 107, 177, 259.

³⁹ E. Kitzinger, "The Threshold of the Holy Shrine: Obser-

vations on Floor Mosaics at Antioch and Bethlehem," *Kyriakon, Festschrift Johannes Quasten*, ed. P. Granfield and J. Jungmann, II (Münster, 1970), 639–47, here 646, quoting *CI* 1.8.1: "... signum salvatoris Christi nemini licere vel in solo vel in silice vel in marmoribus humi positum insculpere vel pingere, sed quodcumque reperitus tolli."

⁴⁰ A. Grabar, "Deux portails sculptés paléochrétiens d'Égypte et d'Asie Mineure et les portails romains," *CahArch* 20 (1970), 15–28; W. K. Prentice, *Syria*, PPUAES (Leiden, 1921), nos. 856, 913, 920, 921; *IGLSyr*, IV, nos. 1694, 1698.

⁴¹ R. Weiss, "L'Arco di Augusto a Fano nel Rinascimento," *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 8 (1965), 351–58, here 356; G. Castellani, "La Chiesa di San Michele in Fano e gli artisti che vi lavoravano," *Studia picena* 3 (1927), 147–82, here 153.

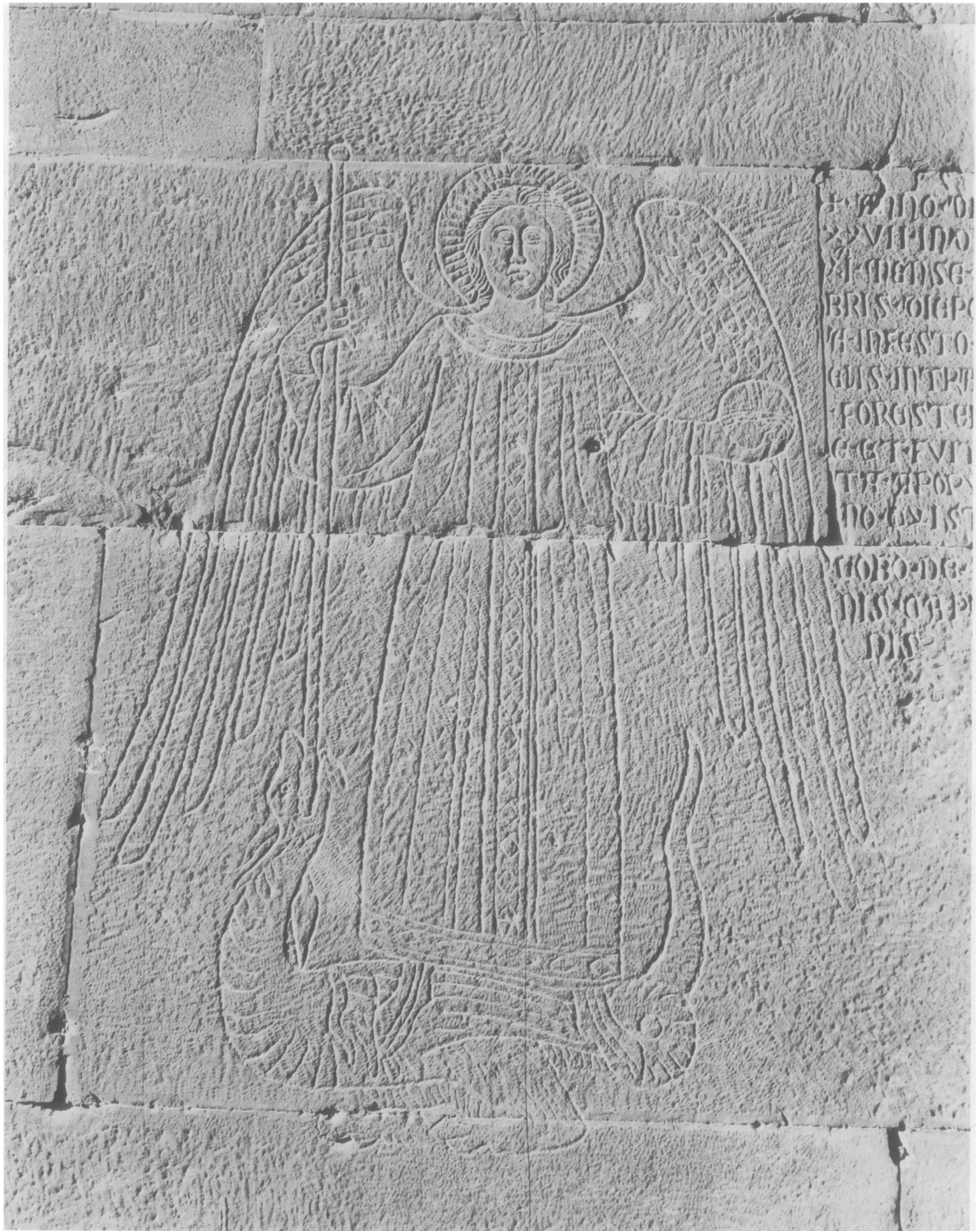
⁴² Weiss, "L'Arco," 355 ff.

⁴³ E. Galli, "La sistemazione della Porta di Augusto a Fano," *BA* 31 (1937), 273–79, here 277.

⁴⁴ F. J. Heyen, "Simeon und Burchard-Poppo. Aus den Anfängen des Stiftes St. Simeon in Trier," *Institutionen, Kultur und Gesellschaft im Mittelalter, Festschrift für Josef Fleckenstein* (Sigmaringen, 1984), 195–205, here 200.

⁴⁵ *ActaSS*, June 1, *Vita auctore Eberwino Abbate S. Martini Treviris*, 85–104; Heyen, 197 ff.

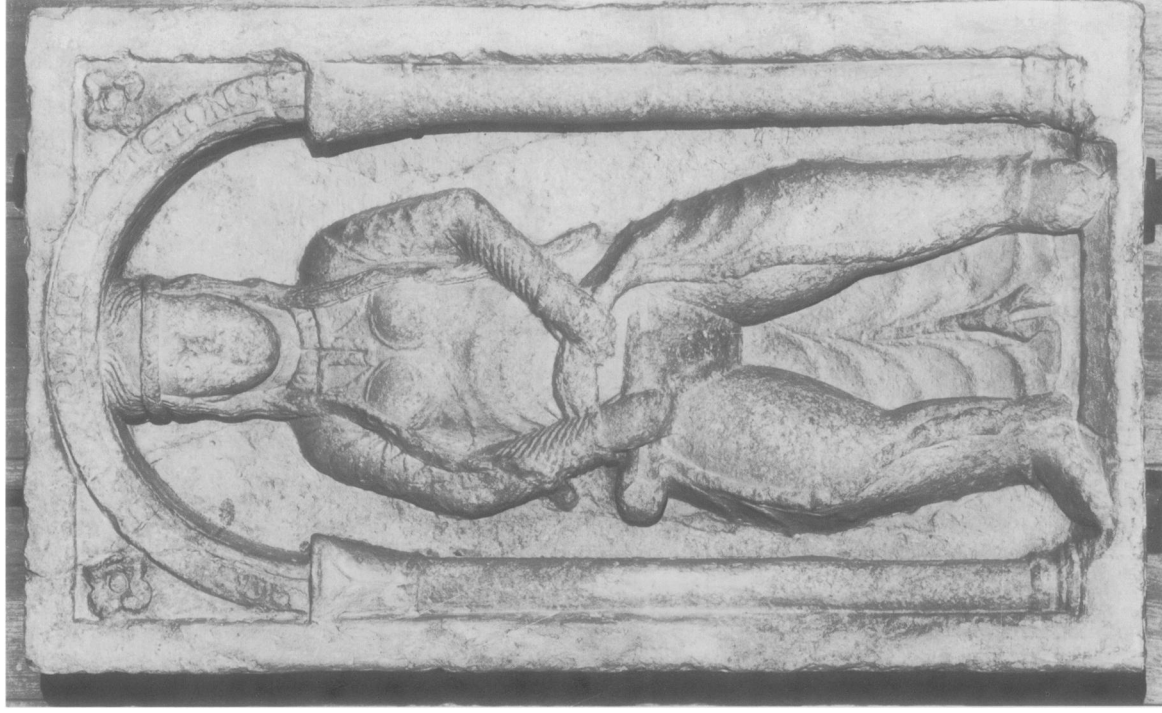
⁴⁶ Eberwin, 89 ff; Heyen, 200.



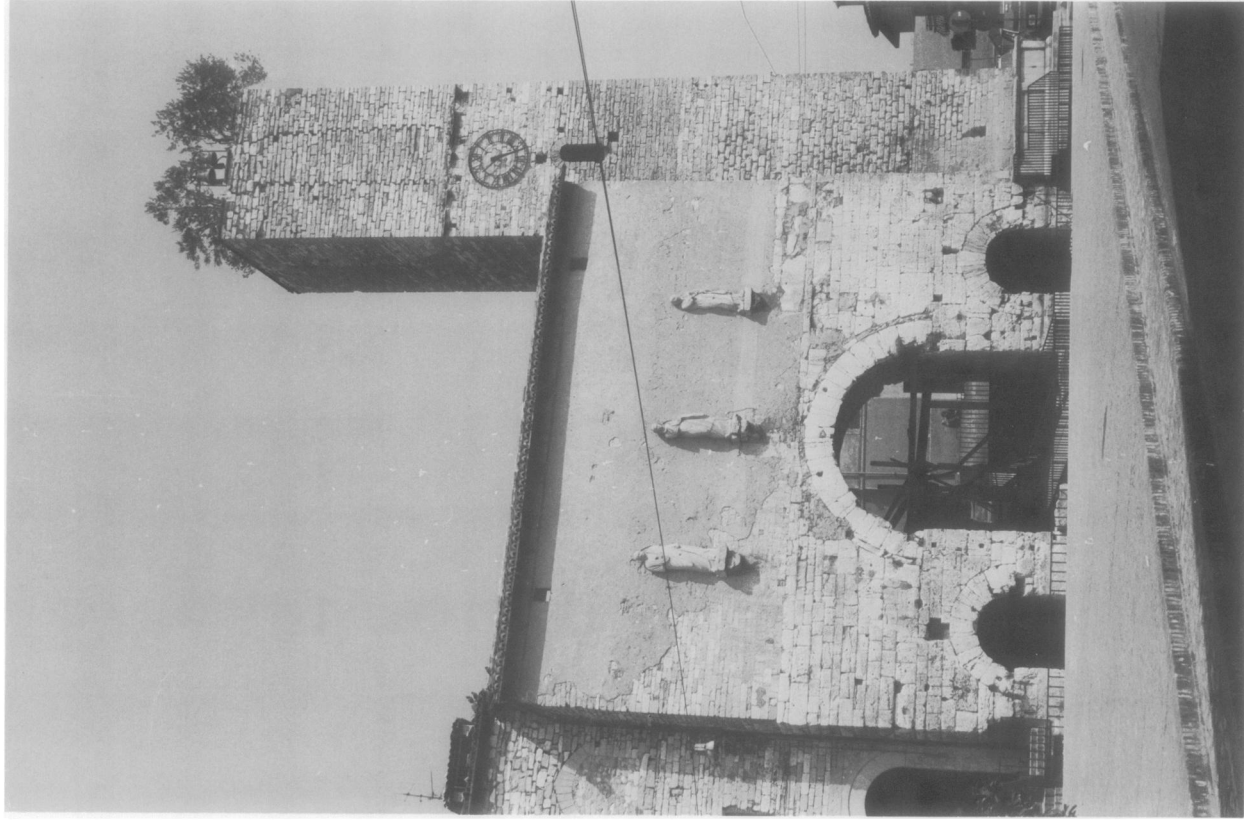
1. Rome, Porta Appia, Saint Michael, 1327



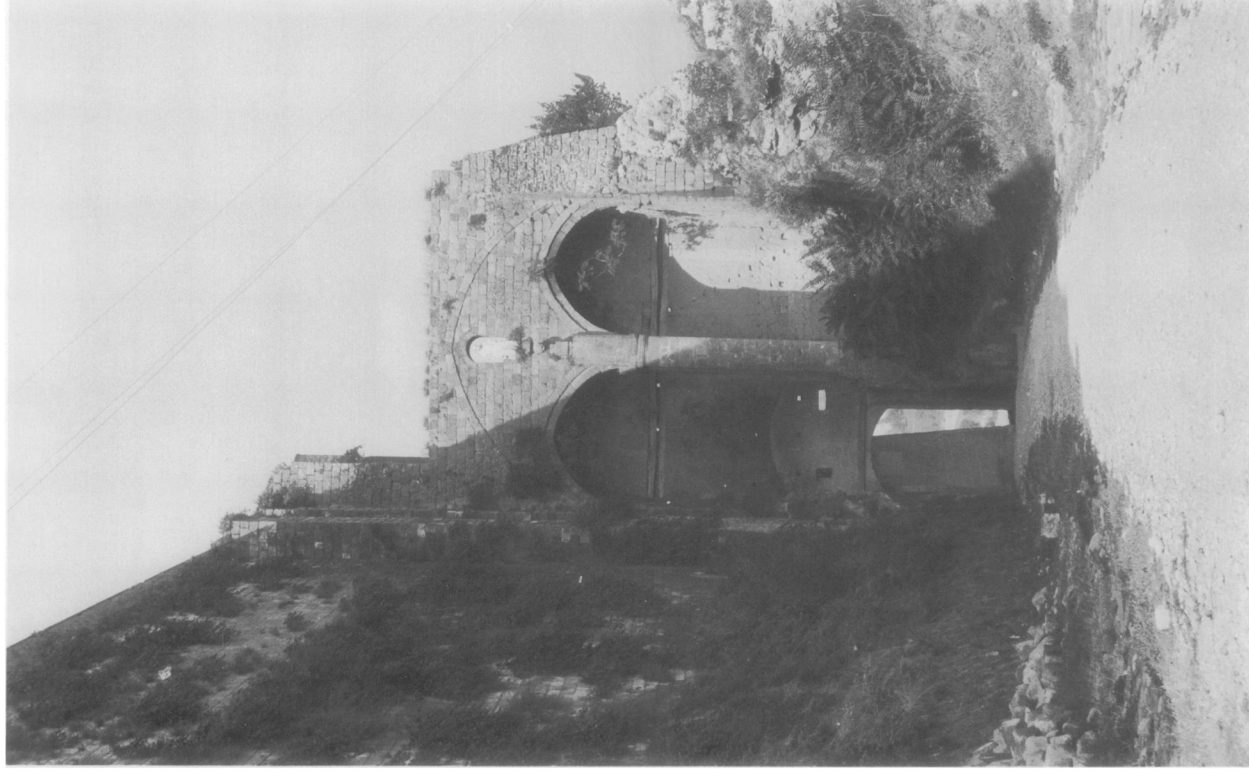
2. Milan, Castello Sforzesco, Frederick Barbarossa(?), marble (photo: Gabinetto Fotografico Comunale)



3. Milan, Castello Sforzesco, Beatrice of Burgundy(?), marble (photo: Gabinetto Fotografico Comunale)



4. Spello, Porta Consolare



5. Orvieto, Porta della Rocca



6. Milan, Castello Sforzesco, relief from the Porta Romana: return of the citizens to Milan; marble (photo: Gabinetto Fotografico Comunale)



7. Milan, Castello Sforzesco, relief from the Porta Romana: the troops of Bergamo, Cremona, and Milan advance on the city; marble (photo: Gabinetto Fotografico Comunale)



8. Milan, Porta Nuova ca. 1891 (photo: Gabinetto Fotografico Comunale)

de Bourbon, writing in the later thirteenth century, records that St. Dominic often made a circuit of the wall to greet the pious women who lived in cells within it.⁴⁷ As we shall see later, an oratory was established at the Porta Ostiense in the Middle Ages. In Rome, too, a crudely incised figure of the archangel was incised on the intrados of the Porta Appia to record the repulse of Ludwig of Bavaria in 1327 (Fig. 1.).⁴⁸ Both the Virgin and St. Michael later appear on the grandiose Arco de Santa Maria at Burgos erected in the mid-1530s to honor Charles V.⁴⁹

Images of saints were not always sufficient to protect the threshold. In the thirteenth century at Siena a priest was engaged by the Sienese commune to exorcize the Porta Camollia after spells had been laid on it by the Florentines.⁵⁰ Subsequently, in order to find remedies of suitable potency for a magical counteroffensive, payments are recorded to two intrepid citizens who spent a night at the gate perfecting a potion.⁵¹ It was surely no accident that in the fresco cycle in the upper church at Assisi St. Francis is shown at the gate of Arezzo exorcizing its demons. The dangers imminent at the city gate could draw forth an even more vigorous imagery, as Giotto's fresco of Injustice in the Arena Chapel makes plain. There a blind tyrant sits askew, a cruel billhook in his hand before a closed gate set between riven towers. Linked with this concept is one aspect of the tradition of defamatory images, which was particularly rich in Italy.⁵² On the Porta Romana and Porta Tosa of the reconstructed walls of Milan were set the savagely denigratory reliefs that probably represent Frederick Barbarossa and his consort, Beatrice of Burgundy (Figs. 2 and 3). It was Carlo Borromeo who ordered the latter's removal.⁵³ For obvious reasons *pittura infamante* was commoner than sculpture.

⁴⁷ ActaSS, Aug. 1, *De S. Domenico confessore*, 359–654, here 467, no. 564.

⁴⁸ + ANNO DNI. M. CCC. XXVII. INDICTIONE. / XI MENSE SEPTEM/BRIS DIE PENULTIMA FESTO SCI MICHAELIS INTRAVIT GENS/ FORESTIERA. INVRB/E. ET FVIT DERELLA/TA. APOR LO ROMA/ NO QVI STANTE IA/COBO DE PONTIA/NIS CANTE REGIO/NIS.

⁴⁹ I. Gil y Gabilondo, *Memorias históricas de Burgos y su provincia* (Burgos, 1913), 96.

⁵⁰ A. Lisini, "Superstizioni," *Miscellanea storica senese* 1, 6 (1893), 124–28, here 125; W. Braunsfels, *Mittelalterliche Stadtbaukunst in der Toskana*, 5th ed. (Berlin, 1982), 83.

⁵¹ Lisini, "Superstizioni," 127.

⁵² G. Ortalli, *La pittura infamante nei secoli XIII–XIV* (Rome, 1979), 43 ff.

⁵³ Ibid., 67 ff. The identification is not entirely certain. M. Preceruti Garberi, *Il Castello Sforzesco. Le raccolte artistiche: Pittura e scultura* (Milan, 1974), 40 ff. The relief of the female figure is carved from a reused Roman tombstone.

The genre of painting for which Castagno was later renowned could also appear at city gates, and the link with justice at the gate is here confirmed.⁵⁴ In 1310 new gallows were set up at the Porta della Giustizia in Siena.⁵⁵ Hanging near the scene of the crime was regarded as an important deterrent. At Siena, however, executions were forbidden at the Porta Camollia or in the area behind it, the reason being that as the gate straddled the road to Rome many pilgrims sojourned in its neighborhood.⁵⁶

The hard-headed Magister Gregorius might still be astounded by the walls and gates of Rome, and the verses of Hildebert of Lavardin sprang to his lips, yet the most celebrated gate in medieval Italy was not in Rome but instead marked the entrance to the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies.⁵⁷ Capua was an imperial *limes*. Frederick II raised the gate in 1234: "suam ymaginem in aeternam et immortalem sculpi fecit."⁵⁸ The association of gate and river was familiar in Antiquity.⁵⁹ The Porta Urbica at Rimini was approached over a bridge across the Ausa, and the arch at Saintes, erected on the bank of the Charente in A.D. 19, was indeed a rare case where a gate had statuary at its summit—disposed laterally because of the shallowness of its structure.⁶⁰ On the main facade of the Capua gate was seated the crowned emperor. With its two polygonal towers "mire magnitudinis, fortitudinis et pulchritudinis," Capua is structurally comparable to Roman gates such as Turin or Spello.⁶¹ Andrew of Hungary recorded the inscriptions that accompa-

⁵⁴ C. Frey, ed., *Il Codice Magliabechiano* (Berlin, 1892), 99; Ortalli, *La pittura*, 90.

⁵⁵ (A. Lisini), "Porta Giustizia e le forche di Pecorelle," *Miscellanea storica senese* 5, 8 (1898), 171–73, here 172: "... le quali forche debiano essere ben alte e con catene e oncini di ferro, si che chi impiccato ine sarà, inde non si possa levare o vero muovere se non per sè medesimo cada. Et a quella parte il malfattore sia mandato ad impicare verso la quale parte commise il maleficio."

⁵⁶ (Lisini), "Porta," loc. cit. In 1309 the Commune had decided to make a park here also; cf. W. Bowsky, *The Finance of the Commune of Siena 1287–1355* (Oxford, 1970), 20.

⁵⁷ G. McN. Rushforth, "Magister Gregorius De mirabilibus urbis Romae: A New Description of Rome in the Twelfth Century," *JRS* 9 (1919), 14–58, here 45. Hildebert's poem is in PL 171, col. 1409. For Capua cf. C. A. Willemsen, *Kaiser Friedrichs II. Triumphator zu Capua* (Wiesbaden, 1953).

⁵⁸ Andrei Ungari *Descriptio victoriae Karolo Provinciae comite reportatae*, MGH, SS, 26, 559–80, here 571. Graphic reconstructions are proposed by Willemsen, *Kaiser Friedrichs*, figs. 105–7.

⁵⁹ Holland, *Janus* (above, note 24), 287 ff.

⁶⁰ Kähler, "Triumphbogen," col. 422, no. 21 (Saintes); J. Gardner, "Boniface VIII as a Patron of Sculpture," *Roma Anno 1300, Atti del Congresso Internazionale di Storia dell'Arte Medievale, Roma 19–24 Maggio 1980* (Rome, 1983), 513–27, here 517.

⁶¹ Andrei Ungari *Descriptio*, loc. cit.; I. Richmond, "Augustan Gates at Torino and Spello," *BSR* 12 (1932), 52–62; Kähler, "Torburgen," 100 ff.

nied the seated emperor and the three enigmatic busts on the gate facade thus:

Caesaris imperio regni custodia fio
Quam miseros facio quos variare scio
Intrent securi qui querunt vivere puri
Infidus excludit timeat vel carcere trudi.⁶²

Similar admonitions had been inscribed on the Porta Soprana at Genoa, where Frederick of Hohenstaufen, as emperor-elect, was to spend several weeks in 1212.⁶³ The Genoese walls had been raised under the threat of attack by Barbarossa. They carried a bombastic inscription that included the phrase "si pacem portas licet has tibi tangere portas, Si bellum queres tristis victus (que) recedes"; the inscription ended with the irresistible play on the word *Ianua*, which echoed the well-known medieval tag "Genua mundi totius ianua."⁶⁴ Frederick may have remembered Genoa, but his statue on the gate at Capua calls to mind also the statues of the "ever victorious" Arcadius and Honorius on the gates of Rome.

In assessing Capua, it should be recalled that Frederick certainly knew classical arches, for he is recorded as having looted the statues from the Porta Aurea at Ravenna, although, as the chronicler noted, their destination was the lime-kiln.⁶⁵ The Ravenna gate, which was torn down in the late sixteenth century, is known to have possessed large tondi comparable in type to those later carved at Capua. They may even once, as Kähler surmised, have contained busts.⁶⁶ Other examples of this motif are known, apart from those that survive on the gate at Rimini.⁶⁷ The setting of the statuary at Capua is idiosyncratic and without classical precedents. The contamination of gate iconography by that of the triumphal arch attests how far the functional differences between the two had become indistinct by the thirteenth century.⁶⁸ It is possible that we can see something of the transition in act, as it were, again at Spello (Fig. 4). There the so-called Porta Consolare was supplied, at some later

date, with a group of Roman statues scarcely appropriate for their setting. The gate was incorporated into medieval buildings, and it was also substantially heightened in post-classical times, as an examination of the stonework makes plain. It is sometimes claimed that the statues were placed there in the sixteenth or seventeenth century.⁶⁹ But their corbels look too crude and, given the demonstrable reuse of spolia in doorways of the region during the Middle Ages, it may well be that this may have been the case also at Spello.⁷⁰

The primary purpose of the commemorative arch was to support statuary, but the presence of statuary on a gate could lessen its defensive capability. At Orvieto, a naturally fortified site, the late thirteenth-century gates were defensive in purpose; on the Porta della Rocca and the Porta Maggiore Pope Boniface VIII was represented seated, and for this the Hohenstaufen gate at Capua was the only real precedent (Fig. 5). Seated figures of the emperor were not common in Antiquity and, as far as is known, unattested on gate or arch facades. In the classical period, when the emperor was represented seated, it was generally the guise of a deity.⁷¹ Evidently antique prototypes lay behind the adoption of busts at Capua, and their revival may also have had an imperial connotation. The Capuan busts were set in *clipei*, and the two male busts were obviously conceived as pendants, arranged on either side of a single arched gate, as at Rimini.

The seated Boniface at Orvieto was clearly influenced by Capua, but the gate layout is very different, as befits its precipitous setting. There the Porta della Rocca is a postern, obliquely piercing the city wall, its sharply rising approach road exposed to the city's defenders. Certain architectural motifs link it with the nave of the new cathedral which was under construction at precisely this time.⁷² Above the double entrance appeared the figure of the pope, now unfortunately so damaged

⁶² *Andrei Ungari Descriptio*, loc. cit.; E. Bertaux, *L'art dans l'Italie méridionale*, II (Paris, 1903), 709 ff.

⁶³ *Annales januenses*, FStI, 2, 122; T. van Cleve, *The Emperor Frederick II of Hohenstaufen* (Oxford, 1972), 81.

⁶⁴ C. Dufour Bozzo, "Il reimpiego dei marmi antichi nei monumenti medievali e l'esordio della scultura architettonica del 'Protoromanico' a Genova," *BA* 63 (1979), 1-58, here 10 note 32.

⁶⁵ H. Kähler, "Die Porta Aurea in Ravenna," *MDAI* 50 (1935), 172-244, here 172 note 2.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 194.

⁶⁷ Mansuelli, "Il monumento," 28; also at the Forum of Augustus in Rome, and Tarragona.

⁶⁸ Gardner, "Boniface VIII," 517.

⁶⁹ Kähler, "Torburgen," 100. For the later date for the emplacement of the statues cf. G. Bonasegale Pitteri, "Indagine sulla struttura di Spello medioevale," *RIASA*, ser. 3, 1 (1978), 153-98. For a medieval date, G. Urbini, *Spello, Bevagna e Montefalco* (Bergamo, 1929), 23.

⁷⁰ For example, in the ex-cloister doorway of S. Pietro, Spello.

⁷¹ H. G. Niemeyer, *Studien zur statuarischen Darstellung der römischen Kaiser*, *MAR* 7, 54 ff. Cf. reviews of Niemeyer by Fittschen, *BjB* 170 (1970), 545, and Blanck, *GGA* 223 (1971), 100.

⁷² The attached half-column, the foliate capital, and the column base may be compared with those of the Duomo. Cf. R. Bonelli, *Il Duomo di Orvieto e l'architettura italiana del Duecento Trecento* (Città di Castello, 1952). The details of the gate are somewhat simplified, given their external setting.

that the precise import of his gestures is irrecoverable. The other gate at Orvieto, the Porta Maggiore, like the major gates of Roman cities or contemporary Genoa and Milan, cut the road at right angles. Its thirteenth-century aspect is now, however, undiscoverable.

The Orvietan authorities, rather than Boniface VIII, were responsible for both gates and statues. The simulacra of the pope were neither apotropaia nor yet tutelary deities, nor can they be interpreted as signs of dominion. As cardinal, Benedetto Caetani had gratified the commune of Orvieto in some particularly shady deals in the Val di Lago, and the city remained, during his pontificate, a favored center of villeggiatura.⁷³ But it was not a papal possession, and the gate statues should properly be regarded as a compliment to a powerful patron. They may be contrasted to the almost contemporary program of gate decoration of another hill town, Volterra. There the commune, confiding itself once again to the belief in a god-guarded city, arranged for the painting of the Virgin and Child above their city's gates.⁷⁴ Seventy years earlier, Verona, a city with fine surviving Roman gates, had done the same.⁷⁵

Thus far an attention to programs has tended to obscure important points of chronology and function. At Milan the Porta Romana of 1171 documents the rebuilding of the city after its destruction by Barbarossa. This resettlement is shown on the reliefs of the Porta Romana. In the yawning gap in the physical record between the decay of the late antique cities and their medieval renewal, the reliefs from the destroyed Milanese gate are precious (Figs. 6 and 7). Both fragmentary reliefs are signed, one somewhat vaingloriously by Girardus, who styles himself POLLICE DOCTVS, the other by a certain Anselmus, no sculptural highflyer, who compares himself to Daedalus.⁷⁶ Nonetheless,

these reliefs are of exceptional importance in that they show, in a continuous narrative, a historical event. Also they were designed, like the earlier and infinitely more sophisticated reliefs on the interior of the Arch of Titus, to be read by the observer passing through. That the reliefs on the Arch of Titus attracted attention during the Middle Ages is shown by their reflection in the Hamburg manuscript of the *Liber ystoriarum romanorum*.⁷⁷ The Porta Romana reliefs in Milan are a civic iconography, even a triumphantly anti-imperial iconography, and their design is related inextricably to their site. The narrative unrolls at capital level, as in other contemporary sculptural ensembles. With the rebuilding and embellishment of cities in the twelfth century, in which Milan was self-evidently a special case, a communal city gate iconography may be said to begin.

A functional development can be observed in the fourteenth-century gates of Florence and Siena which, like Milan, refurbished their city walls in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In all three cases the motives were a mixture of civic pride, economic prudence, and defensive apprehension. In none of these centers, significantly enough, was the survival of ancient gates or arches a factor. All three nevertheless possessed a Porta Romana named after the road that it spanned, and in this they were not exceptional. In the case of Siena and Florence, too, several of the main gates were enormously larger than any imaginable traffic need. Size was one of the representative elements, as it had been in the Porta Urbica at Rimini.

Florence had begun her third circuit of walls in 1299. This circuit definitively abandoned the Roman centuriation that had been the basis of the earlier perimeter.⁷⁸ Giovanni Villani, who was well informed about the project, gave as its rationale "per più fortezza e bellezza," which echoes Aristotle's prescription for the ideal city.⁷⁹ The sentiment is

⁷³ D. Waley, *Mediaeval Orvieto* (Cambridge, 1952); P. Herde, "Das Kardinalscollegium und der Feldzug von Orvieto in Val di Lago (1294)," in *Römisches Kurie, kirchliche Finanzen, Vatikanisches Archiv, Studien zu Ehren von Hermann Hoberg*, ed. E. Gatz (Rome, 1979), 325–75, here 333 ff, 354 ff.

⁷⁴ E. Fiumi, *Volterra e San Gimignano nel medioevo* (San Gimignano, 1983), 41.

⁷⁵ Statute of 1228, quoted by Braunfels, *Mittelalterliche Stadtbaukunst*, 83. Besides the Virgin, SS. Zeno, Christopher, and Peter were to be represented.

⁷⁶ L. Beltrami, "I bassorilievi commemorativi della Lega Lombarda già esistenti alla antica Porta Romana," *ASiLomb* 22 (1895), 395–416. + ISTvD SCVLpSIT OP' GIRARD' POLLICE DOCTO. The second inscription reads HOC OPUS ANSELMUS FORMAVIT DEDALUS ALE. P. Mezzanotte, "Degli archi di Porta Romana," *ASiLomb* 37 (1910), 423–39; T. B. Olivari, "I rilievi di Porta Romana e alcune sculture milanesi dell' XII secolo," *Contributi dell'Istituto di Storia dell'Arte Medioevale e*

Moderno, II, Pubblicazioni dell'Università del Sacro Cuore, Contributi ser. 3, Scienze storiche 14 (Milan, 1972), 44–52.

⁷⁷ T. Brandis, *Historiae Romanorum Codex 151 in scriin. der Staats- und Universitäts-Bibliothek Hamburg* (Frankfurt, 1974). The date there proposed is probably too early. Cf. I. Acciacci, *Un codice romano del primo Trecento: Il Liber Ystoriarum Romanorum di Amburgo*, Università di Roma, Tesi di Laurea 1981/82, 106.

⁷⁸ Braunfels, *Mittelalterliche Stadtbaukunst*, 64; M. Lopes Pegna, *Firenze dalle origini al medioevo* (Florence, 1962), 339 ff; D. Friedman, "The Porta a Faenza and the Last Circle of the Walls of Florence," *Essays Presented to Myron P. Gilmore*, ed. S. Bertelli and G. Ramakus, II (Florence, 1978), 179–92; R. Manetti and M. C. Pozzana, *Firenze. Le porte dell'ultima cerchia di mura* (Florence, 1979).

⁷⁹ G. Villani, *Cronaca* (Florence, 1845), IX, 137, XI, 35; Aristotle, *Politics*, Loeb, ed. H. Rackham (London, 1959), 1331a, p. 590.

shared in the well-known description of the Porta Romana at Siena by the nearly contemporary Sienese chronicler Agnolo di Tura: “è molto nobile e bella porta e magna e maxima quando sera fornita la figura di nostra Donna chapo a essa porta.”⁸⁰ With Florence and Siena, however, the physical record is better supplemented by documents and descriptions.

At Florence only one gate from the earlier circuit survives with its figural decoration intact, the Porta San Giorgio, probably built soon after 1260.⁸¹ Its vigorous relief of St. George and the Dragon may be a little later in date, but the architecture is Romanesque, and the tutelary saint is a soldier. A single saint as decoration is also unlike the subsequently designed city gates. Already in 1266 a tax *una tantum* had been levied against those who had built illegally against the city wall.⁸² From 1285 onward four major new gates were built, each spanning a major road into the city. These *porta maestra* were all tower gates, machicolated and open at the back. Standardization was the aim, and there is also a surprising similarity in their decoration.

November 29, 1299 saw the foundation of the final circuit of Florentine walls.⁸³ Barbicans were added in 1321, and two years later came a prohibition on building nearer than eight braccia to the city wall (ca. 4.7 m).⁸⁴ Two contracts survive, for the sculptural decoration of the Porta Romana and the Porta San Gallo.⁸⁵ The sculpture was entrusted to an obscure mason-carpenter, Paolo di Giovanni. In January 1329 he agreed with the overseers of the new walls, Fra Zenobio and Fra Giovanni, both Cistercians from the Badia a Settimo, to provide statuary for the Porta Romana (San Pier Gattolini Nova) for the sum of 100 florins, exclusive of the cost of quicklime, lead, and polychromy.⁸⁶ The Vir-

gin and Child were to be placed in the center: at the side of the gate, John the Baptist and St. Nicholas; on the other, SS. Peter and Paul. These statues were to be four braccia high (ca. 2.4 m), and they were to be set into a tabernacle.⁸⁷ The tabernacle over the gate to the Campo Santo at Pisa may convey something of the general impression.⁸⁸ The baldachin over the statues was probably as much for weatherproofing as a symbol of status.⁸⁹ At the same time Paolo di Giovanni contracted to make the sculpture of the Porta San Gallo. Here the central group was the Coronation of the Virgin, to be flanked by the Baptist and St. Reparata, and here too the statues of the central group were to be four braccia in height. In the sculpture, as in the architectural ensemble, standardization was the watchword. While the regulation of height is significant, another phrase in the contract is even more interesting. The accompanying saints should be of a size “sicut requiritur altitudine”—a visual sensitivity of some moment when we reflect on the modern arguments about the statues on the Campanile.⁹⁰ In the undistinguished remnants of Paolo di Giovanni's ensemble, now in the Bargello, this stiltedness of the figures is very plain. For the statues of the Porta San Gallo, Paolo was to receive 160 florins, but when they were actually completed it was recorded that “ad presens comune Florentia est in magna penuria et necessitate pecunie” and could not pay.⁹¹ The rest is silence.

Recently the obverse of this coin has been revealed. A newly published document records the prohibition of painting or sculpture on Florentine gates or public palaces that was not of the Virgin, the pope (presumably John XXII, a statue of whom had already been made for the facade of the Duomo to partner Boniface VIII), Charles d'Anjou and his descendants, or the king of France.⁹² The imagery within the city-state was

⁸⁰ *Cronaca senese di autore anonimo*, RISS, n.s. XV, vi, 140; Friedman, “The Porta,” 188; Braunfels, *Mittelalterliche Stadtbaukunst*, 83.

⁸¹ Friedman, “The Porta,” 180; Villani, *Cronaca*, IX, 257: “. . . vecchia torre e porta di S. Giorgio. . .”

⁸² Manetti and Pozzana, *Firenze*, 33.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 65. The attribution to Arnolfo di Cambio and the comparisons with Roman gates (*ibid.*, 50, 55) are unconvincing.

⁸⁴ Manetti and Pozzana, *Firenze*, 65; Friedman, “The Porta,” 180.

⁸⁵ C. Milanese, “Allogagione di alcune figure di pietra per la porta San Pier Gattolini di Firenze, fatta a maestro Paolo di Giovanni scultore fiorentino,” *Giornale storico degli archivi toscani* 3 (1859), 282–87, prints the contract of 1329 for the Porta Romana (San Pier Gattolini). For the Porta San Gallo contract see G. Milanese, *Nuovi documenti per la storia dell'arte toscana* (Florence, 1901), 39–42, no. 61 (21 June 1342). Manetti and Pozzana, *Firenze*, 160 ff.

⁸⁶ Milanese, “Allogagione,” 283.

⁸⁷ In the 1342 contract the framing tabernacle was more elaborate (or more minutely specified); Milanese, *Nuovi documenti*, 40. A reproduction of the surviving statues is in Braunfels, *Mittelalterliche Stadtbaukunst*, fig. 11.

⁸⁸ E. Carli, “Per un ‘Maestro dei Tabernacoli,’” *Belle arti* 1, 2 (1946), 102–13.

⁸⁹ The document at Volterra published in Fiumi, *Volterra*, 41, mentions a payment “. . . pro faciando fieri unum porticum super picturas Sancte Marie apud portam Sancti Francisci. . .”

⁹⁰ Milanese, *Nuovi documenti*, 39: “. . . altitudinis quelibet ipsarum figurarum brachiorum quattuor et grossitie sicut requiritur dicte altitudini et figuris.”

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁹² M. Siedel, “‘Castrum pingatur in palatio’ 1. Ricerche storiche e iconografiche sui castelli dipinti nel Palazzo Pubblico di Siena,” *Prospettiva* 28 (1982), 17–35 (S. Moscadelli, “Appendice documentari,” 33–41, here 41). For the papal statues see Gardner, “Boniface VIII,” 518 ff.

here regulated by decree. Although the contract for the Porta San Gallo required prominent heraldry on the podium and baldachin, heraldry was forbidden within the walls, as the new document reveals, and this decree was promulgated a few months after the signing of the gate contracts. Particularly unwelcome was the mingling of the arms of private families with those of the Angevin royal house.⁹³

Among the cities of Lombardy, wrote the patriotic Bonvicino dalla Riva, Milan stood out, like a rose or a lily among flowers, a lion among beasts, and an eagle among birds.⁹⁴ Its mode of government was very different from that of Florence or Siena, yet its gate ensembles have much in common with both Tuscan cities. Militarily they were very simple, an obligatory passage through a wall flanked by projecting towers.⁹⁵ Like ancient gates, they originally had a courtyard behind, part defensive, part economic filter. At Florence the tax offices were near the gate, and the Sienese authorities in the 1320s were concerned to prevent contraband entering from the Piazza San Francesco.⁹⁶ In all these towns, it should be remembered, the mendicant churches stood on the periphery, and this circumstance influenced the iconography of several gates in a common direction. The banded masonry of the Milanese gates resembles Orvieto, but the double entrance of the major gates is an ancient functional solution thereafter widely copied. The Milanese gates once carried the heraldic colors of their *quartiere*, as was the case with the fourteenth-century gates of Perugia.⁹⁷ At Milan too the sculptural programs were virtually standardized, although exceptionally Roman spolia were ostentatiously inserted into the structure of the Porta Romana (Fig. 8). The Virgin and Child with attendant angels were accompanied by Am-

brogio, the patron of the city, like the Baptist for Florence, and the saints associated with the parishes or churches in the vicinity of the gate.⁹⁸ The qualitative level of the sculpture is higher than that in Florence, a fact most probably attributable to the entrepreneurial abilities of the Tuscan mason Giovanni di Balduccio, whose workshop was active in the gate program promoted by Azzo Visconti after 1328.⁹⁹

More eloquent of the life of a self-governing commune is the documentation for the gates of fourteenth-century Siena, when taken in conjunction with the surviving monuments. The gates once again are militarily simple, with imposing barbicans (several of which are well preserved), and the main gates straddle the road at right angles. Unlike Florence or Milan, however, their decoration was predominantly painted, with few sculptural additions. Yet the Lupa suckling Romulus and Remus that still remains in place in the colossal Porta Romana is faithfully recorded as the gateway to the well-governed *contado* in Ambrogio Lorenzetti's fresco in the Palazzo Pubblico.¹⁰⁰ Siena had dedicated itself to the Virgin on the eve of Montaperti, and this dedication is naturally enough exemplified in the gate decorations. The Virgin appeared on every gate, as she did in the civic Maestà of Simone Martini in the Palazzo Pubblico. The Assuntà was painted on the Porta Camollia, where the *antiporta* had been completed about 1270.¹⁰¹ In 1360 a group of citizens petitioned that the Madonna, as "special refuge of the Commune," should be completed "coloraliter," which perhaps implies that only a sinopia appeared there before that date.¹⁰² Later, the Camollia Assuntà, which had been repainted by Benedetto di Bindo in 1414, became a place of almost daily meditation for San Bernardino, and it fur-

⁹³ Moscadelli, "Appendice," 41: "Que arma Regis Karoli vel descendentium eius non sint mixta cum aliquibus armis alicuius singularis persone."

⁹⁴ F. Novati, ed., "Bonvicinus de Rippa De Magnalibus Urbis Mediolani," *BISI* 20 (1898), 61–188, here 63; Hyde, "Mediaeval Descriptions," 327 ff. For Bonvicino cf. P. Pecchiai, "I documenti sulla biografia di Buonvicino della Riva," *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana* 73 (1921), 96–127.

⁹⁵ F. Reggiori, "L'architettura militare a Milano e nel territorio durante l'età medioevale e rinascimentale," *Storia di Milano*, VIII (Milan, 1957), 777–820, here 794. For gates in northern Italy generally cf. G. Fasoli, *Dallo "civitas" al comune nell'Italia settentrionale* (Bologna, 1969), esp. 55 ff.

⁹⁶ D. Balestracci and G. Piccini, *Siena nel Trecento* (Florence, 1977), 20.

⁹⁷ Reggiori, "L'architettura," 795. For Perugia see U. Nicolini, "Le mura medievali di Perugia," *Storia e arte in Umbria nell'età comunale, Atti del VI Convegno di Studi Umbri, Perugia 1968*, II (Perugia, 1971), 694–769.

⁹⁸ Reggiori, "L'architettura," 795. Thus on the Porta Ticinese, besides the Madonna and Sant'Ambrogio, appear Lorenzo, Eustorgio, and Pietro Martire, all connected with churches in the immediate area of the gate.

⁹⁹ C. Baroni, *Scultura gotica lombarda* (Milan, 1944), 63 ff. A number of the original statues from the Milanese gates are in the Castello Sforzesco, Porta Orientale, nos. 804–808. Nos. 030–032 are from an unknown gate, and three statues from the Villa Tittoni at Desio, nos. 1003–1005, were also probably from a city gate originally.

¹⁰⁰ G. Rowley, *Ambrogio Lorenzetti* (Princeton, 1958), fig. 159.

¹⁰¹ V. Lusini, "Antiporta di Camollia," *Miscellanea storica senese* 2, 8 (1894), 125–26; G. Milanesi, *Documenti per la storia dell'arte senese*, I (Siena, 1854), no. 60, 258 ff.

¹⁰² Milanesi, *Documenti*, 258: "Et est verum quod cordibus inest Senensium sub quodam peravido singulari honorabilitas in pictura reverendissime Matris Dey Virginis gloriose ab experto cognite dicti Communis refugium singulare. . . ."

nished a moving image in his great vernacular sermon preached at Siena in 1427.¹⁰³ The other Marian programs of the Sienese gates had an equally checkered history, of interrupted execution, litigation, and repair. Sassetta died, leaving his fresco on the Porta Romana half-finished. In the petition of his children for payment of their late father's fee, the adjudicators, Sano di Pietro and Vecchietta, decided that their contract must be honored, but that the commune should retain "tutt'i disegni fatti per la detta porta."¹⁰⁴ Sano di Pietro later completed the decoration, but only after it had been pointed out, in a meeting of the Consiglio della Campana, that it was shameful for the commune that the gate remained incompletely painted.¹⁰⁵ As at Florence, much of this is symptomatic of a financially hard-pressed city administration unable adequately to satisfy the aspirations of its inhabitants.

At Rome in the fourteenth century an oratory, San Salvatore de Porta, was associated with the Porta Ostiense "ad honorem imaginem Domini Dei." It was a dependency of San Saba with a daily cult.¹⁰⁶ The late ninth-century Johannapolis had a saviour at the gate.¹⁰⁷ Like Constantinople, therefore, Rome had an image of Christ to protect its walls. A pioneering article has recently revealed an astonishing frequency of churches dedicated to St. Nicholas set on main roads, near gates, and often near river crossings; the research concerned medieval north German settlements, but the dis-

course could equally apply to the Porta San Nicolà at Florence.¹⁰⁸ For *Patrozinienforschung* city gate dedications in medieval Italy is virgin territory. Mendicant saints appear on a number of gates, and the Dominican cardinal legate Latino Malabranco is known to have had images of St. Dominic painted on all the gates of Bologna in 1279.¹⁰⁹

On the interior face of the Porta San Giorgio at Florence there survives a badly damaged fresco of the enthroned Virgin and accompanying saints generally attributed to Bicci di Lorenzo.¹¹⁰ It is not untypical, and serves to point up our conclusion. Hieratic, simple in composition, it is primitive in comparison to the civic schemes in the Palazzo Pubblico at Siena, or those at San Gimignano, Perugia, or indeed Florence itself.¹¹¹ There is nothing preserved in gate decoration, not even Capua, that approaches the philosophical or aesthetic complexity of Ambrogio's frescoes in the Sala della Pace. There were no Tyche, no personifications such as enliven that composition, or the Augusta Perusia of Nicola Pisano's Fontana Maggiore.¹¹² Female saints were rare. The new, encyclopedic iconography of the medieval Italian city-state was deployed elsewhere. While part of the simplicity of gate programs was evidently contingent on strategic and functional needs, it also points, surely, to the far more ancient origins of gate iconographies, where fossilized imagery continued long after it had been abandoned for cathedral doors and council chambers. This is all the more striking as most of the gates were necessarily modern structures. Nevertheless, the day was not far distant when gunpowder and the bastion would sweep them away.

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¹⁰³ E. Bulletti, "La Madonna di Porta Camollia," *Bullettino di studi bernardiniani* 1 (1935), 147–56, here 155; S. Borghesi and L. Bianchi, *Nuovi documenti per la storia dell'arte senese* (Siena, 1898), no. 43, 78 ff.; L. Bianchi, *Le prediche volgari di San Bernardino da Siena dette nella Piazza del Campo l'anno MCCCCXXVII*, I (Siena, 1880), 22 ff, 25; H. van Os, *Marias Demut und Verherrlichung in der sienesischen Malerei 1300–1450*, *Kunsthistorische Studien van het Nederlands Historisch Instituut te Rome* 1 (The Hague, 1969), 183 ff.

¹⁰⁴ The Sassetta contract is printed by Milanese, *Documenti*, no. 43, 242 ff (3 May 1447). Sassetta died in 1450. The gate painting had, prior to Sassetta's commission, been left incomplete by Taddeo di Bartolo; *ibid.*, no. 192, 274 ff. The assessment by Sano di Pietro and Vecchietta was made in December of that year; *ibid.*, no. 193, 276 ff.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 215, 307 ff (12 September 1459). A restoration report on the frescoes appears in *Mostra di opere d'arte restaurate nelle province di Siena e Grosseto* (Genoa, 1981), no. 44, 120 ff, figs. 108–17.

¹⁰⁶ H. Grisar, "Memorie sacre intorno alla Porta Ostiense di Roma," *Civiltà cattolica* 1244 (19 April 1902), 1–11 (*separatim*). Cf. the long inscription published in V. Forcella, *Iscrizione delle chiese e degli altri edifici di Roma dal secolo XI fino ai giorni nostri* (Rome, 1869–84), 12, no. 457, 342.

¹⁰⁷ Grisar, "Memorie," 10. The inscription ran: "Hic murus adest Salvator invitaque porta/ Quae reprobis arcet, suscipiatque pios."

¹⁰⁸ K. Blaschke, "Nikolaipatrozinien und städtische Frühgeschichte," *Zeitschrift der Savigny Stiftung (Kanonistische Abteilung)* 84 (1967), 273–337. Some further material is in A. M. Orselli, *Il santo patrono cittadino fra tardo antico e altomedioevo* (Rome, 1981), 771–84.

¹⁰⁹ A. M. Viel and P. M. Girardin, eds., *Jean Mactei Caccia O.P. Chronique du Couvent des Prêcheurs d'Orvieto* (Rome-Viterbo, 1907), 35.

¹¹⁰ Manetti and Pozzana, *Firenze*, 170 ff.

¹¹¹ N. Rubinstein, "Political Ideas in Sienese Art: The Frescoes by Ambrogio Lorenzetti and Taddeo di Bartolo in the Palazzo Pubblico," *JWarb* 21 (1958), 179–207; U. Feldges-Henning, "The Pictorial Programme of the Sala della Pace: A New Interpretation," *JWarb* 35 (1972), 145–62; J. Riess, *Political Ideals in Mediaeval Italian Art* (Ann Arbor, 1981).

¹¹² K. Hoffmann-Curtius, *Das Programm der Fontana Maggiore in Perugia*, *Bonner Beiträge zur Kunstwissenschaft* 10 (Düsseldorf, 1968); J. White, "The Reconstruction of Nicola Pisano's Perugia Fountain," *JWarb* 33 (1970), 70–83.